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ABSTRACT

Arthur Lockwood Wagner, who graduated from West Point in 1876, was one of the best known and most influential U.S. Army officers of his day. An intellectual and educator, Wagner was instrumental in some of the most critical reforms in U.S. Army history. He advocated enhanced military education, adopting modern combat techniques, holding large-scale maneuvers, and developing a new doctrine of combined arms combat. Wagner's prolific writings helped to move the Army from its obsession with the glories of Civil War days to an era of a new professional ethic based on rigorous education and training. He was instrumental in designing curricula for the military educational institutions of his time and in creating new methods of training that included theory as well as practice. Unlike some reformers of his era, however, Wagner remained focused on the Army's role in defending the nation in war and did not become involved in social movements that called for the Army to help in other ways on the domestic front. Although Wagner is best remembered as a tactician, his work did have some effect on American strategy. His best-known book, "Organization and Tactics," focused strategy on the need for offensives. Wagner died in 1905, just before being promoted to brigadier general. (Contains 201 references.) (KC)

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